

What XEWA means to a genomics system

builder

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Points of View

- XEWA can be viewed from many angles
 - Genome resource provider
 - Technology specialist
 - ◆ XML
 - ◆ Ontologies
 - ◆ Web robot
 - ◆ etc
 - Genome system/tool builder
 - Genome system/tool end-user
 - ...and probably many others



For those new to this subject domain...

- Biology is ugly
- Easy solutions don't work
 - Nomenclature
 - Taxonomy
 - Terminology
- Biology is poor
- Biology is fiercely independent and wary of “standards”



Lessons we've learned the past decade+...

- Technology gets adapted slowly in biology
- Users must see a meaningful payoff to them
- Each new technology breakthrough becomes a millstone
- Biology is sensitive to economics
- Defacto standards rule in biology



Welcome to my nightmare...

- There are literally many hundreds of potentially-relevant Web sites we need to access/integrate
 - There are almost no standards out there
 - Many sites are run by amateurs with no time or background to deal with complex new interfaces
 - Few sites keep cross-links really current. Fewer still ensure that others link correctly to them.
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- How can we build a compelling case to improve this situation?



A few Suggestions for this Meeting...

- Try to stay focused on the end goal: to move towards an environment where genomics resource providers are more inclined to use some standard to share data than to stay isolated
- Remember that 80% of this problem is politics and sociology; only 20% is technological religious warfare
- Biology does not recognize any single “best way” to do anything, so don’t expect one in this case